

Application No. 09/476,618
Amendment Dated April 8, 2004
Reply to Office Action of January 9, 2004

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-2 (cancelled).

Claims 3-4 (cancelled)

Claims 5-8 (cancelled).

Claims 9-11 (cancelled).

Claim 12 (cancelled).

Claims 13-24 (cancelled).

Claims 25-26 (cancelled).

Claims 27-28 (cancelled).

Claims 29-33 (cancelled).

Claims 34-44 (cancelled).

Claim 45 (currently amended) A method for managing a memory in a workstation when a size of user selected files exceeds the memory capacity in the workstation, comprising:

displaying a plurality of open medical images;

unloading an unloaded message selected from at least one of the plurality of open medical images from the memory of the workstation; and

saving display settings of the unloaded image such that if the unloaded image is not closed and a user decides to redisplay the unloaded image, the unloaded image appears to have remained virtually open to the user and as if the unloaded image had not been unloaded.

Claim 46 (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the display settings are saved in the memory of the workstation.

Claim 47 (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the unloaded message is transferred to a storage device connected to the workstation by a network.

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Claim 48 (new) A method for managing a memory in a workstation when a size of user selected medical image files exceeds the memory capacity in the workstation, the method comprising the steps of:

opening a plurality of medical image files to display a plurality of medical images;
prioritizing the plurality of medical image files using a prioritization scheme having at least three levels including

a first level comprising a currently viewed medical image;
a second level comprising medical images in a viewing stack; and
a third level comprising medical images related to medical images with a higher priority; wherein

the medical images from the first level are designated with a higher priority than the medical images of the second level and the medical images of the second level are designated with a higher priority than the medical images of the third level; and

unloading from the memory of the workstation a medical image file having a lower priority than at least one of the open medical image files stored in memory, wherein the unloaded medical image file includes at least a portion of at least one of the open medical images.

Claim 49 (new) The method of claim 48, wherein the third level only comprises open medical images related to open medical images from the first level.

Claim 50 (new) The method of claim 48, further comprising the step of saving the visual display settings of the unloaded medical image file such that if the unloaded medical image file is not closed and a user decides to redisplay the unloaded image file, the unloaded medical image file appears virtually open to the user and as if the unloaded medical image file had not been unloaded.

Claim 51 (new) The method of claim 48, wherein the unloaded open medical image file is transferred to a storage device connected to the workstation by a network.

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Claim 52 (new) A system for managing memory in a workstation when a size of user selected medical image file exceeds the memory capacity in the workstation, the system comprising:

 a processor configured to prioritize the user selected medical image file using a prioritization scheme having at least three levels including

 a first level comprising a current viewed medical image;
 a second level comprising medical images in a viewing stack; and
 a third level comprising medical images related to medical images with
 a higher priority; wherein

 the medical images from the first level are designated with a higher priority than the medical images of the second level and the medical images of the second level are designated with a higher priority than the medical images of the third level; and

 the memory configured to unload an unload medical image file having a lower priority than at least one of the user selected medical image files stored in memory, wherein the unload medical image file includes at least a portion of at least one of the user selected medical image files and wherein the processor is coupled to the memory.

Claim 53 (new) The system of claim 52, wherein the third level only comprises files related to files from the first level.